

*Mission:*

*The Office of Juvenile Justice protects the public by providing safe and effective individualized services to youth, who will become productive, law-abiding citizens.*



*Dr. Mary L. Livers, Deputy Secretary*

As ever, this issue of *The Inside Scoop...of OJJ* is packed with news about what you all are doing across the state. But the big news right now is the swollen Mississippi River and all the havoc that has created. We know that sadly, many of our fellow Louisianians are suffering, and will lose homes, possessions and livelihoods while the majority of us remain safe and dry. At least we can rest easy that loss of human life will be minimal due to the timely and diligent actions by our state and local government agencies. Everyone who will be impacted by floodwaters has ample time to take care of business and evacuate to higher ground.

While OJJ is not directly involved in mitigation, safety and rescue operations as some other agencies are, we have the responsibility to assure the safety of the youth in our custody and the staff who care for them. It is very interesting that all three of our secure care facilities are situated on or very near rivers: Bridge City's front yard is the Mississippi River levee; Jetson is about a mile from the banks of the Mississippi and Swanson is adjacent to the Ouachita River. Even the Columbia site is near the Ouachita. Staff in every facility and every regional office are geared up and ready to move in the event of a threat to the safety of our kids and those in local detention centers. I am very pleased and impressed with the emergency preparedness plans that we have in place and I know that every employee, in every OJJ location, is ready to act on a moment's notice.

Whether it is routine operations or emergency, OJJ staff take it in stride and get the job done. You are our greatest asset, and YOU ROCK!

"Doc" *Dr. Mary L. Livers*

## The Daily Motivator

### The best you've ever been

With all its imperfections and challenges, today is still the best day yet. Though you may have known much love and joy and fulfillment in the past, you can experience even more today.

For you can bring with you to this day the best of all you've ever known, and then you can add to its beauty. On top of that, you can leave behind the disappointments and limiting assumptions that have held you back, and free yourself to truly soar.

Sure, there are problems that you will face. Yet you can face them with a lifetime of wisdom and experience, more today than you've ever had before.

You're better prepared than ever to transform those problems into opportunities. And you're more determined than ever to transform the best of those opportunities into real, meaningful value.

All of what you've been through has made you stronger and more capable, in ways that you're not even fully aware of yet. Today you can choose to use that ever-growing strength and ability in the service of your most treasured visions.

Whatever else may be going on, in many important and powerful ways you're the best you've ever been. Grab the opportunity that is today, and make it into something great.

— Ralph Marston

## Staff Spotlight

### Spotlight on...



**PPO2  
LaNita Lars,  
Shreveport Regional Office**

**PPO2 LaNita Lars** has only been with OJJ for two years, but she has known what she wanted to do with her life for a long time. She knew that she wanted to work with kids, preferably in her hometown.

A Shreveport native, LaNita followed her brother to McNeese State University in Lake Charles, where he had a football scholarship. She studied nursing for a year before realizing that wasn't for her, and she changed majors to study criminal justice in order to go into law enforcement. While in college, LaNita interned at the Lake Charles OJJ office with RM Ann Vick and her staff. "Ann Vick and the people in the Lake Charles office are great," LaNita said. That experience cinched her career plans.

After graduating in 2002, LaNita moved to the Dallas-Ft. Worth area and worked as an officer at a juvenile detention center. She moved to Austin, where she worked as a TSA agent for a time, then served as a truancy probation officer for a non-profit organization, Volunteers for Youth Justice. But she wanted to move back home and attend graduate school. Back in Shreveport, LaNita earned her Masters in Liberal Arts at LSU-S, while working as a substitute teacher. Her Masters thesis explored the impact of mentoring children based on the Big Brother/Big Sister model. And she finally attained the position she wanted: LaNita became a PPO in the Shreveport Regional office.

"I would like to spotlight PPO 2 LaNita Lars because she is a very dedicated and hard working employee," said RM Kristi Martin. "LaNita has an extremely positive attitude, and she is committed to helping our youth. LaNita is a positive role model for other staff, and she is an asset to Shreveport OJJ."

**"I try to look at things through the eyes of our kids...they can't see anything different or envision more for themselves. I try to show them that they can do more..."**

"I try to look at things through the eyes of our kids," LaNita said. "A lot of our kids come from low-income neighborhoods and they can't see how to get out. They can't see anything different or envision more for themselves. I try to show them that they can do more, and maybe years from now they will understand. Some kids just don't get it at all."

"But I've seen some kids turn their lives around," she continued. "One of my kids was at Swanson after being in a group home. Now he's working on his GED and recently interviewed for a job. He's attending school and going to class consistently. That is huge for this kid. Another youth finished his time at Swanson and got his GED there. He is in the process of looking for work. Those are success stories."

"The FINS kids, especially, can be difficult cases," she noted. "The kids are often ungovernable, and FINS cases can be more complicated. You work with the whole family – the judge offers services to families. Some parents don't want to accept treatment because they think there is nothing wrong with the way they are doing things, and they don't need any help. The child can go to a group home, but then they return to the same environment when they come home. For the kid, the repeat pattern can be frustrating. Other parents accept the help and are willing to change – they will go out of their way to

help their kids. Some parents will maintain constant contact with me because they know it's important to reinforce our message."

LaNita's approach to working with youth is to listen to them. "Don't count them out. Maybe they are not doing the right thing now, but what they really need is someone to listen to them," LaNita said. "Often there is no one who listens to them, and that's what they really need. It's so important not only to listen, but to talk with them on their level."

**"It's important to be respectful of our youth, because disrespect is what they see. We have to treat them like we want to be treated."**

Another key is giving the youth respect, LaNita said. "It's important to be respectful of our youth, because disrespect is what they see. We have to treat them like we want to be treated."

"I let my faith determine how I treat people," LaNita stressed. "My faith keeps me grounded and helps me through the problems. God opens the door for me, and it's easy to walk through. My grandmother always said 'be still and know that I am God.' I keep listening, and I can hear her saying that. Something else that I also learned from my grandmother – she believed in helping kids."

"When I am transporting a kid I like to have the radio on K-LOVE (a Christian music station)," LaNita said. "I hope that something in those songs will sink in. Our kids hear so much junk – they need the light. I do not have to preach. They may believe what the music is saying to them and the music can penetrate and touch their hearts. I think God uses me to help reach that child."

LaNita says she enjoys simple pleasures. "I like a good movie, I love the classics. I like good food, working out, and I love the outdoors. I really enjoy hiking and canoeing." She also loves spending time with

her siblings' children. LaNita has two brothers and two sisters – and 10 nieces and nephews.

What does the future hold for LaNita? “I’d like to continue on as a PPO and see where it takes me,” LaNita said. “I’d like to move up and continue working with kids. I don’t see myself going anywhere else. We have our stressful moments, but I really enjoy what I do and I hope to make an impact on our kids.”

Fortunately for the kids in this OJJ star’s caseload, LaNita Lars’ efforts to meet the mission come naturally. Her commitment to children and to our mission shines through in all she does.

## CQIS Policy Updates

- A.2.1 Employee Manual
- A.2.61 Pre-Employment Health Screening/Physical Examination for Direct Care Positions
- A.3.3 Requests for Statistical Information; Collection of Fees for Reproduction of Public Records and Statistical Reports
- B.6.1 Health Care
- B.8.13 Youth Street Gangs and Notification Requirements
- C.2.15 Control and Use of Flammables, Toxic and Caustic Substances (FTCs)

Rescinded: A.5.7 Request for Statistical Information



*Fuschias in Port Hudson. We have had requests for photos of flowers as fillers...here’s a way to see if anyone reads **The Inside Scoop**...please email pictures of what you are growing in your garden (or any garden for that matter) and we will use them in future issues. Email to [jerel.giarrusso@la.gov](mailto:jerel.giarrusso@la.gov)*

## Transitions...

### Comings and Goings....

## New Faces

### Bridge City

Whitney Buckles – JJS 1  
 Matthew Dorsett – JJS 1  
 Dameia Dupas – JJS 1  
 Charles Ferman – JJS 1

Lasunia McKneely – JJS 2  
 Bobby Tinner – Corr. Program Mgr. 1

### Swanson

Allen Tanzy – JJS 1

## Promotions

### Bridge City

Cassandra Washington –Adm. Prog. Mgr. 2

### Swanson

Phyllis James – Adm. Prog. Manager 1

## Retirements

### Hammond

Julie Eudy – Probation and Parole District Manager 3 (Regional Manager), 34 years of service

### Jetson

Thaddues Williams – Juv. Food Prod. Worker, 10 years of service



## **OJJ's Investigative Services Unit Teaches Best Practices to Mississippi DYS Investigators**

Early this year, **Kathy Pittman**, Director of the Mississippi Division of Youth Services, contacted **Dr. Livers** with the news that their department is going through a settlement agreement as OJJ did several years ago. Ms. Pittman requested that OJJ's Investigative Services (I.S.) staff provide training for one of her investigators. As it turned out, four investigators from Miss. DYS spent several days in April in Baton Rouge for the training, conducted by OJJ's **I.S. Acting Director Col. Chad Wells**.

The Mississippi guests were Robert Luke, investigator for a juvenile facility that houses about 58 youth; Debra Lomax and Jacqueline Mitchell, who primarily handle children's health care situations and other types of investigations for the state, including FEMA payment fraud, welfare fraud, issues dealing with state employees, etc., and Frank Saddler, who serves as the Director of Investigations.

Following is the impressive and comprehensive curriculum that Chad singlehandedly developed, facilitated and taught.

### **Day One**

Began with an introduction from **Chief of Operations Elyn Toney Peterson**.

A "round table" discussion was held to discover each investigator's duties. They were given a history of our investigative unit (formerly known as "PZT"). Discussion of the Louisiana Settlement Agreement's requirements of PZT.

### **Day Two**

**Dr. Livers** met with the group and welcomed them to OJJ.

General overview of the Investigative Services handbook.

**BCCY Investigator Wanda Lucas** discussed case management. The group was introduced to the tracking forms and the databases that OJJ uses to track each case. Discussion of how tracking can assist the supervisor in reviewing each investigator's caseload. Discussion about filing of cases and the process for completing it.

The group was introduced to the Central Registry Database, its purpose and a general overview of the way OJJ uses the database for tracking rule violations and cases involving individual youth or staff members. The database is also used for background checks on people who seek employment with OJJ, to review any past cases in which the individual may have been involved.



*Chad Wells teaching the Mississippi DYS investigators.*

Report Writing was the most extensive component of the training. The group was shown the various report formats used by IS. Cases were reviewed to show the level of detail that each report contains and the importance of that detail.

Departmental policies were discussed to stress to the investigators that they must be familiar with the agency's policies in order to know what infractions occurred. When procedures change, policies must be amended to address those changes, and there are times when policies must be created to address the change.

**Day Three**

PREA discussion.

**OJJ Attorney Cynthia Eyre** discussed Civil Service issues. She stressed the importance of gathering the facts needed in the report for her to win cases.

**Site visit to Jetson.** The group was introduced to the Lazer Voice System, the telephone system utilized to record telephone calls. These are the phones in the housing units that are used by youth to make calls to the outside. Discussion on the benefits of this tool in an investigation (sexual abuse cases, escapes, etc.). The Miss. investigators were really impressed with this.

Case files were reviewed so they could see what a case file looks like from initiation to completion. They were introduced to the different forms of documentation received by IS, and how the documentation is filed and used in the course of an investigation.

**Day Four**

**CQIS Administrative Program Director Lynne Geromini** spoke with the group to discuss audit issues when OJJ was under the Settlement Agreement. Lynne discussed what the monitors would look for each visit and issues that would come up. She also showed the trainees the Employee Activity Database (aka the VR1 Database) that OJJ uses to track employee rule violations. The group found this interesting.

Evaluation of cases – review of evidence and analysis of interviews to arrive at a logical conclusion for the outcome of the case. The group went over several cases to learn how OJJ determines the outcome.

**Jetson Investigator Durwood Gros** discussed the video camera system and its use in the investigative report.

The close out session allowed for questions and comments. All the participants were very impressed with the training and learned a

great deal of valuable information that they could use. Frank Saddler said that he was anxious to speak with the case monitor when they return to Mississippi, to let her know what they learned. He was certain that she would be impressed with the knowledge they brought back.

During the week of training, the Mississippi investigators were introduced to Louisiana cooking a la Mike Anderson's and Copeland's. Chad said they liked fried alligator!

The week following the training, Chad and Dr. Livers received a complimentary email from Director Pittman, expressing her appreciation for all that we taught her team.



*OJJ presented the trainees with certificates of completion of the IS training. From left, Chief of Operations Ellyn Peterson, Frank Saddler, Debra Lomax, Robert Luke, Jacqueline Mitchell and IS Col. Chad Wells.*

“This is yet another example of how the reforms that OJJ has put into place over the past few years have put our agency on the national stage,” Dr. Livers said. “The people from Mississippi could have gone to any state for training opportunities, and they chose to come here. I am very proud of Col. Chad Wells and the work he has done to create and implement a training program. I have no doubt that we will soon have visits from investigators from other states as the word spreads about OJJ’s implementation of best practices and our training expertise. Thanks once again to Chad for his efforts and initiative.”

## Success Stories from Around the State

### Bridge City Reports on Youth Success

This is about a young man who completed the Bridge City JUMP program:

Good morning and hello. I know it has been a while, but I thought you all would like to know some great news. Yesterday, **Gerald** was officially inducted into the National Honor Society at a banquet at his high school in Lake Charles. He maintains a 4.0 cumulative grade point average and just completed the program at Boys Village last week.

I thought you would be proud to know that all your hard work has paid off and that everything you all have contributed to his life - in a positive manner - to help him become successful, is evident in his life. He continues to be a model student at school (11th grade) and is preparing to take the ACT and is filling out college applications.

Thank you, and you all are always welcome to contact me to check on his progress. I apologize that it has taken me some time to reach back to you all, but I was focusing on Gerald as a priority. Anyway, God bless and keep up the great work at BCCY.

*Mrs. Cypra D. Ellison*



*Texas Bluebonnets...in Austin, Texas.*

### Lafayette Reports Success Stories

Here are two success stories from **PPO Cassandra Brown's** caseload: Matthew G. was selected by West St. Mary High School teachers and principals as Freshman Student of the Month for April. PPO Brown walked into the school to complete a visit with another client, and noticed Matthew's picture on the school's main bulletin board. Congratulations Matthew!

**Bernard G.** obtained his GED in February. After being placed on probation for truancy, Bernard decided to quit school. **PPO Brown** served as a strong advocate for him to continue his education and obtain his diploma, despite past school-related problems. PPO Brown went to the JAG program and spoke to the director, who is PPO Brown's former high school principal, about placement in the GED program. He was accepted and attended until the program ended. Again, Bernard became discouraged and began to give up. PPO Brown encouraged Bernard and referred the juvenile to Franklin Adult Learning Center. Bernard took the GED test last fall, and failed the Writing portion of his test. In February Bernard took the writing portion of his GED test, passed, and obtained his GED. Congratulations Bernard and best wishes in all your future endeavors!

### Monroe OJJ Reports Success

**PPO Monet Newman** was recently recognized for her part in the successful outcome and release from supervision of parish probationer, D.O.B. (a success story in bleak family circumstances!) Monet conducted the home study on potential relatives and since the approved placement, the young man blossomed! His school attendance and grades improved, and he is no longer in special education classes.



## OJJ Youth Take Center Stage at the Governor's Conference on Juvenile Justice

OJJ youth stole the show at the annual Governor's Conference on Juvenile Justice held in New Orleans. Our kids impressed everyone with their talent and their excellent manners – they made us proud.

For the past several years, artwork by youth in all three facilities has been featured in a silent auction, and every piece is sold, every year. Bidding is always brisk as conference participants vie for their favorite item. Proceeds are deposited into the youths' accounts so they can purchase items at the canteen. This year, Administrative **Assistants Wanda Murray, Gwen Brinkley and Shaeki Shanklin** handled the entire auction project, from checking in all the artwork to setting up the display and handling the funds. Many thanks to these ladies for an outstanding job. Thanks also to Jetson art instructor **Randell Henry**, who spends countless hours with the youth every year getting their artwork ready to show, and always attends the conference to check in on the auction.



*Youths' artwork in the silent auction.*

This year for the first time, **Chef Ron Sonnier's** Culinary Arts students were invited to show off their skills by bringing dessert for 500 to the conference. Presentation is half of the equation, and the youth did a great job in creating an attractive display. Chef Sonnier's famous lemon squares and various types of cookies were a hit, as was the BCCY Culinary

Arts students' cookbook, which was distributed to conference participants.



*Above: from left, ADA Ronnie Rossitto, Chef Sonnier, and BCCY Culinary Arts students. Left: Chef Sonnier displays the BCCY cookbook.*

Another annual feature at the conference is a performance by an OJJ choir at the keynote luncheon. This year, we saw another first – a single choir consisting of youth and staff from both Bridge City and Jetson. Jetson **Group Leader Frances Bailey** and Bridge City **JJS5 Seletar Gosa** are the choir mistresses, and they worked together so the two choirs became one for a rousing performance.



*The choir performs at the conference.*

Thanks to the staff of the Louisiana Commission on Law Enforcement, which produces the conference and hosts our youth. A special thanks to **Calcasieu Parish Assistant District Attorney Ronnie Rossitto**, who is a great champion for our youth and who makes them feel like honored guests at the conference.



## Thibodaux Regional Office

### Congratulations

**PPS Lorraine Thibodaux was named April Employee of the Month.** Lorraine is a valuable asset to our team in Thibodaux.

### Community Service Events

**SSC Reshonn Saul** conducted a Social Skills lesson with youth participating in JAM (Juvenile Anger Management). **PPOs Eddie Fannin, Tressa Gros and Allison Lirette** had an opportunity to participate with the youth by having a sit down pizza dinner. Afterwards everyone enjoyed a social skills game.

This activity allowed the youth to engage in a family type dinner and have communication with others while sitting at the dinner table. Probation officers had a chance to see a different side of the youth and hear about the things they are learning in sessions. It also allowed the youth to see a different side of their PPOs as they enjoyed different lessons.

### “Carnage for the Cure”

We would like to acknowledge **PPO Herman Matherne** for organizing the 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Carnage for a Cure event, held at the Chackbay Fairgrounds near Thibodaux. All proceeds went to the American Cancer Society's Relay for Life. Herman brought in wrestling celebrities such as Robert Gibson of the “Rock-N-Roll Express.”

In past events, he brought celebrities such as Greg “The Hammer” Valentine and “Hacksaw” Jim Dugan. **Chris “Rocket” Paul, TOJJ's Transport Officer**, participated in this year's event.

We want to recognize the efforts of Herman and Chris for giving back to the community to benefit others.

## Tallulah Regional Office

**PPO Truett Glass** held an 8 hour PPCT refresher class for the staff.

Tallulah OJJ staff honored three Administrative Professionals with breakfast and gifts.

**PPS Margo Corulla and AC3 Martha Hattaway** participated on the committee for the Madison Parish Relay For Life held in April. They helped coordinate teams and activities for the event, held at Madison Parish High School. The event raised over \$34,000 from the community.

**PPS Johnnie Bowman** attended a meeting with the Madison Parish School System regarding dropout prevention. The purpose of this committee is to connect students to the future in various ways.

## Swanson Center for Youth

### SCY Thanks Wal-Mart for Donation

Swanson would like to send out a big **THANK YOU** to the West Monroe Wal-Mart. The Wal-Mart manager called us one day and said if we could pick up a brand new basketball goal, it was ours. So you can probably guess what **Director Carolyn Atkins** did. She sent **JJS Sharon Jackson, Training/Development Specialist James Woods and Recreation Specialist Gwen Gene** to pick it up. *Pictured below: Sharon Jackson, James Woods and Gwen Gene with the new basketball goal.*



## Gym Painting – It Looks Like Kids Live Here

When **Director Carolyn Atkins** said she “wanted this place to look like kids live here,” some staff took that and ran! **Recreation Therapists Willie Newell** and **Byron Maze** and Special School District **Instructors Nita Andrews** and **Crystal Fant**, with the help of nine youth, spent approximately three weeks working on the gym to make it look like a real school gymnasium.

Now when you walk up to our gym, you know this is home of the **Southside Panthers**.



*SSD Instructors Nita Andrews and Crystal Fant*



*Willie Newell and Byron Maze*



## Swanson's on Fire

To most Ouachita and surrounding parish residents, Wednesday, April 27 seemed to be a beautiful, sunny day spent thanking God that the storm was over and gone. However, for staff and youth at Swanson, it was a sunny yet dark day.

Because of the storm that came through the night before, the Yellow Brick School was left inoperable due to a fire in the boiler room; the Russell Building entrance has no awning and the facility was without electricity until around 6:30 Wednesday evening. It may take a little while to get the Yellow Brick School functioning normally again but “Team Swanson” will endure.

## 100 Men Mentoring Day

The men of Swanson, along with numerous male volunteers from the area dedicated their time on Saturday, April 2, to come out and bond with the youth. Each man was assigned a dormitory and they spent the morning talking with the youth and mentoring them. Our youth really seemed to enjoy the event. Thanks to you all!



*Antique rose at the Independence Park Botanical Garden, Baton Rouge.*

## SCY Again Works with Habitat for Humanity

**Instructor Bobby Moffett** and his Habitat Team are at it again. This month Habitat held a ground breaking ceremony for a new project in Monroe which will consist of several houses.



*Habitat Groundbreaking Ceremony*

Speaking of Habitat for Humanity (HfH), one of Swanson's youth was released this month. But I guess you can't really say **Jenerio Y.**, who was part of the Habitat Team, was "just released." After seven months at SCY, Jenerio left with an early release, a GED and a full-time job with Habitat for Humanity. Things like this makes coming to work every day even more worthwhile!



*Above and below, SCY youth work on a HfH house.*



## Be the Spark That Ignites the Fire

**By Will Lee, Principal**  
Southside Alternative High School

One day a scared little boy is driven to Swanson by his parole officer. He goes through the intake process, and eventually ends up in our school. So what happens next? His defense mechanism kicks in. He must put up a front to show that he is not afraid. He refuses to do any work in class. Now don't tell anyone this, but, he can't read, and he is ashamed of it. In fact, very few of his friends can read. To he and his friends, books are just things, there is nothing there but some strange black markings, and maybe a few pictures.

He talks back to teachers and to secure care staff; he attempts to threaten and intimidate any adult that he can. You see, he knows that the adults will not physically harm him.

I am principal of Southside Alternative High School. We try to instill in our boys that even though their bodies may be confined, their minds need not be. Concertina wire can never prevent an eager mind from growing and soaring to unlimited heights of boundless knowledge. We tell our students that every chance we get, but sadly, so, so many of them do not believe. And I can understand why they don't believe. It is hard to believe that you can succeed when all you have known is failure and despair. It is hard to believe when you have no stable family structure.

How can you believe that education can elevate you above all the crime, the hate, the grief and despair, and constant hunger that ties your stomach in knots when you have seen nothing that fosters the belief in the value of an education? What does school mean when you are 3 to 4 grades behind and cannot even read on a 2<sup>nd</sup> grade level? At that point you go to school to eat and maybe to get a few minutes of peaceful sleep, until some teacher decides to wake you up. You spend your time at school raising hell, so others will not realize that you cannot read. You continue this day



after day until you are finally kicked out of school or locked up in some local detention center, and eventually sent to Swanson, Jetson, or Bridge City.

Now the question is, how do we reach this young boy? How can I get him to understand that one of the answers to his problems is education? That understanding must come from inside; however some outside event or person may well ignite a spark that will eventually become an all-consuming desire for knowledge, growth, and self-improvement. That spark may well be one of you. Come on young men, you know full well that you will listen to your peers before you will listen to advice from your parents. Your peers can have a profound impact on you, be it positive or negative. Our young men need that spark; that spark can come from you. Seeing young men doing worthwhile things, going to school and being successful, having dreams and aspirations, and working hard to fulfill those dreams are the things that our young men need to see. They need to see you, they need to talk with you, they need to hear your story and know that they too can one day walk where you are walking. They need to feel and know that opportunities are limitless, and the only boundaries are those they erect. Help us to help them, and in doing so, you help yourselves.

## Shreveport Regional Office

### Congratulations

**Shreveport OJJ's Employee of the Month** for April was **PPO Todd Carlisle**. Todd was recognized for being a great asset to office.

**Shreveport OJJ** is proud to have passed the Office of Risk Management Safety Audit.

### Restorative Justice

Shreveport OJJ recognized April as Animal Cruelty Prevention Month. Several staff

members are scheduled to participate in the Pet Savers Adoption Awareness Walk 2011.

### News and Notes

**PPS Kim Carlisle** and **PPO Terri Harber** participated in reclassification staffings for youth at SCY in April.

After-hours curfew checks were conducted during April under the supervision of **PPS Steve Martino** and **PPS Guy May**.

**PPO Todd Carlisle** attended Family Night at Goodwill Reintegration.

In April, staff received Disciplinary Process Training from OJJ **Attorney Cynthia Eyre**. This was a very informative training and we learned a great deal about disciplinary procedure.

**Jan Crain, Atejia Glover, Ashley Drexler, Debra Franklin** and **Terri Harber** participated in the AMI-Red River semi-annual audit.

**PPS Steve Martino, PPO John Whitlock, PPO Sandy Ersoff, PPO Jennifer Hill-Dingler** and **PPO Jessica Flores** attended the annual Governor's Conference on Juvenile Justice in April in New Orleans.

**Shreveport Probation Officers and Probation Supervisors** completed their annual firearms re-qualification in April.



*Knockout roses, Baton Rouge.*



## New Orleans/Jefferson Regional Office

### YEP Partnership Brings Success to Kids

Our partnership with the Youth Empowerment Project (YEP) continues to bring success and joy to our kids and their families through the direction of **Glenis M. Scott, LMSW** and staff.

Youth Empowerment recently provided an intense restorative justice working group. We scheduled **Lou Furman** to facilitate this group in celebration of Restorative Justice Week.

Members of the group were shown some new and innovative ways to look at the consequences of their actions through a different set of lenses. Lou facilitated this group using the talking stick and shared with the members the importance of this method.

Several youth initially seemed reluctant but opened up in the group discussion. We also spent time defining how their actions should not allow them to put themselves back into similar situations. In all, most of the youth were really engaged in the discussion and openly talked to Lou. We are scheduling a follow up meeting to see if some of the youth in the group want to discuss some deeper feelings.



*Lou Furman, center, with YEP youth.*

## April was Child Abuse Prevention Month

### Trees for Life Celebration

**Roxann Tuircuit, LMSW**, attended a ceremony in memory of Louisiana children who have died as a result of abuse and neglect. The event was held at Children's Hospital Calhoun Campus in New Orleans. A special guest was New Orleans Saints running back **Heath Evans**.

The Trees for Life tradition was started in 2006, after Hurricane Katrina, to memorialize innocent lives lost due to abuse, while giving rebirth to our storm-devastated community. Trees will be distributed by Heath Evans, whose foundation is dedicated to fostering hope and healing in the lives of children and families affected by sexual abuse.

### CrimeStoppers Teen Peace Summit



This event proved to be quite rewarding as guest speakers delivered powerful messages that impact our youth in a positive manner.

Several OJJ staff members attended the event and listened to expert panels and favorite recording artists speak on topics that are so important in today's environment.

OJJ staff continue to support our youth on and off the job. Recording artists scheduled to appear included **Lupe' Fiasco, Mystikal, Bobby V, Mannie Fresh, Kourtney Heart, Rantz, Y.Love, Jubilee** and more! Speakers included New Orleans Saints **Leigh Torrence**, Retired Saints **Mike McKenzie**, basketball star **Ernie Graham**, OJJ's own PPO3 **Stan Schofield** and **Kendal Francis**.

### Congratulations to an OJJ Daughter



Join us in celebrating the achievement of **Olivia Miller, daughter of PPO Carl Miller.** Olivia Charis Miller was selected by the faculty of her elementary school, Ames Montessori, to receive an academic enrichment camp

scholarship from Jefferson Parish Dollars for Scholars. Academic enrichment scholarships are awarded to students in grades K-8 for summer enrichment programs. Enrichment programs include theater, science, art, computer, dance, study skills, music and student leadership. Olivia's accomplishment was acknowledged at an Awards Ceremony at the Crowne Plaza Hotel New Orleans. Congratulations, Olivia!

### Natchitoches Regional Office

#### Congratulations

Employee of the Month is PPO2 Heather Christophe



Staff hosted a baby shower for **PPO3 Christopher Wyatt and Charity** in April.

**PPO3 Ashley Ward and Shelton Meecham** were married April 9.

### Monroe Regional Office

**RM Patty Newman, PPS Larry Tolbird, PPS Gail Wilson, PPO3 Willie Hunter and PPO3 Gary Hunter** attended the Governor's Conference on Juvenile Justice in New Orleans. **PPS Orlando Davis** was a presenter for the Drug Court workshop.

Congratulations to **Jeremy and Crystal Fox** on the birth of their daughter **Macie Grace** on April 4<sup>th</sup>. She weighed in at 6 lbs., 5 oz. and was 19 ½ inches long. We'll put a picture in next month's *Scoop*.

#### We Celebrated Easter in Style

**DAS Carolyn Lewis** dropped by to enjoy Easter lunch while she was in Monroe attending meetings. **PPO3 Patrick Cooper** manned the grill and everyone brought side items to enjoy. Everything was DELICIOUS.



*DAS Carolyn Lewis, far right, RM Patty Newman, back left, and the Monroe OJJ staff.*



*Reginald Chaptman and PPS Gail Wilson at the POST graduation ceremony.*

**PPO1 Reginald Chaptman** graduated from the North Delta POST Training Academy in April. Great job, Reggie. Glad to have you back!

## Lake Charles Regional Office

**PPO Monet Newman** was selected to present SAVRY information to all non-secure programs in our region to educate the residential program staff on how to interpret SAVRY findings and include the findings in their treatment plans.

Several very dedicated probation officers volunteered their own time to take several special probationers to a recent Swashbucklers' game. **PPO Ronald Gilchrist** and **PPO Jeff Haley** selected deserving kids and personally supervised three juveniles at the game. Domino's pizza was served and a pre-game (Easter/Christian) group lesson was presented. Several OJJS Parish juvenile probationers attended as well. **PPO Monet Newman** and **PPO Hollie Comeaux** made arrangements for two other deserving kids to attend.

Several of our probation officers recently arranged for a number of "at-risk of removal" kids to interview for the Youth Challenge Program. **PPO Alexis Heflin**, **PPO Angie Stevens**, **PPO Monet Newman** and **PPO Ronald Gilchrist** made arrangements for the youth to interview at YCP. Most of the youth we sent were accepted. Good work on being creative to avoid custody and inspire better results for our kids and their families.

**PPO Monet Newman** and **Jeff Haley** made valiant efforts to obtain a firearms instructor and an available range for us to qualify. Thank you for stepping up to help out.

**PPO Ronald Gilchrist**, **PPO Garrick Chambers**, **PPS Ken Vidrine** and **PPO Fred Fontenot** organized a softball event at Boys Village recently, to include the April restorative justice topic with the youth of Boys Village. Due to pending bad weather, they had to keep plans adaptable, so they decided to play basketball instead. The kids got upset but learned to resolve disagreements through circle ups.



**PPS Melissa Cross** recently entered the office in a local bakery's random drawing, and we **WON 20 delicious cupcakes**. It was a small unexpected morale booster.

## Lafayette/Opelousas Regional Office

Thanks to firearms instructors **PPO Bret Gould** and **PPS Courtney Holderman** who gave of their time to make sure everyone in the Lafayette and Opelousas offices were recertified in firearms! You all are the greatest.

The Lafayette region was well-represented at this year's Governor's Conference on Juvenile Justice. **PPOs Andre Harrison**, **Scott Peyton**, and **Jason Trahan**, **PPSs Joey Denais** and **Robert Guirard**, Educational Specialist **Lou Bertha Gloston**, Social Worker **Claude Devillier** and RM **Susan Miller** attended the three-day conference in New Orleans.

**PPO Beth Broussard** attended the 13<sup>th</sup> Annual Louisiana Drug Court Conference in New Orleans.



**PPOs Beth Broussard**, **Denis LaCroix** and **Seth Richard** attended the Crime Victims Awareness Week tree-planting at the AMI Kids-Acadiana group home in Rayne. The residents at the home planted a tree in honor of crime victims. *Pictured are youth Diontra B. and Brandon K. at the tree planting.*



## Congratulations to OJJ Sons



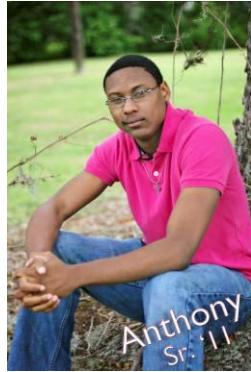
**PPO Karla Meranto's son, Brandon**, graduated from Berwick High School with a 3.5 GPA, and has received a scholarship from Northwestern State University in Natchitoches, where he will be a member of the Drum Line. He has been a drummer for the past eight years, and served as the drum captain during his senior year. He has also been in the Talented Organization of Louisiana since his freshman year. He plans to major in veterinarian medicine at NSU.

**Karla's foster son, Anthony**, will receive his GED and Skill Certificate in welding from Berwick High School. He has completed three semesters of welding at the Louisiana Vocational School. Anthony is currently looking at culinary schools.

Karla said, "I'm extremely proud of both of my sons."



*Heirloom hydrangea in Port Hudson*



## Jetson Center for Youth

### New Transition Services Coordinator at Scenic Alternative High School

**Ms. Adrian Skipper** is the new Transition Coordinator for the youth at Scenic Alternative High School. She brings a wealth of experience to this position. Ms. Skipper earned her Bachelor's degree from Southern University and retired from the East Baton Rouge Parish School System with over 30 years of experience teaching English at Tara High School.

Ms. Skipper will assist youth with pre-release activities and arrange for job interviews, post secondary school enrollments, and information on how to access local resources. She will work closely with the youth's counselor and the dorm leaders to address the many needs of the students.



*Ms. Adrian Skipper*

Ms. Skipper said she is happy to be a part of the JCY family and looks forward to making a difference in the lives of our youth. **Principal Ronnie Knox** is thrilled to have Ms. Skipper providing the link between school and community.



*Camellia  
"Debutante" in  
Port Hudson.*



## Leap Testing was a Success at Scenic Alternative High School

By Gail Hargrove, Instructor

Statewide testing was successfully accomplished for the 2010-2011 school year. The students were eager to do the best work that they could do. They were quiet during the testing sessions and reported to each session ready to "get the job done."

Phase I and Phase II testing results will be forthcoming for each student. The scores are entered into a database at the Department of Education and move forward as the students continue to complete their education. All students in grades 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, and 12 were required to take the test. Students entering grade 9 during the 2010-2011 school, will take the end-of-course test in May. These tests are on-line and include Algebra I - II, Geometry, Biology, History, and English II. The test results are available two working days after completion. The paper-pencil LEAP test will be phased out once more subjects are available on-line. The Department of Education is responsible for constructing the test and field testing it prior to dissemination to all school districts.

Teachers, counselors, and juvenile justice specialists are very proud of the students for cooperating in this testing endeavor. We are eagerly awaiting the results!

## Life Skills Class Enjoys Taste Fair

By Denise Clause, Life Skills Instructor

Society today has the challenge of encouraging youth to live a healthy lifestyle. A healthy lifestyle includes making good choices about the foods we eat and the amount of exercise we get. Youth have been studying about the different "power" and "memory" foods.

Students are learning to develop healthier snack choices, choosing foods that are high in antioxidants and which may lead to improved study habits and memory.

Our Life Skills class recently culminated the Nutrition Unit with a Taste Fair. Some of the foods sampled by the students included strawberries, blueberries, almonds, sunflower seeds and garlic. They also sampled a variety of unique treats, such as papaya, mango, kiwi, sea salt, raw sugar, avocados, large purple grapes, etc. The youth were most impressed with "grapples." Grapples crunch like an apple but taste like a grape and originated in Fiji. Try them for yourselves and see what we are talking about!

To celebrate Cinco de Mayo, some of the youth made homemade guacamole. Many of the youth had never tasted guacamole and were impressed with how easy it was to make. One youth said, "At first I thought it was going to be nasty because of the way it looked. Then after I tasted it, it was better than I thought. When I get out I'm going to go out to eat and order some."

Youth also learned that a balanced diet is crucial to help prevent common diseases such as diabetes and high blood pressure. They also studied the different types of fats, cooking oil, fiber, proteins, etc. Many thanks to **Charles Cave, Jetson Food Service Manager**, and his staff for their assistance and enthusiasm.



*Left: Daroen H. with Charles Cave, Food Service Manager. Right: Emanuel samples a strawberry.*

## CCS Recognizes Staff Member with 5-H Award

Our new medical services provider, Correct Care Solutions (CCS), recently honored a member of their staff at a 5-H Recognition Ceremony. **Jamison Davis, LPC-S, LMFT, NCC**, is a mental health professional at Jetson.

The 5-H award recognizes one individual for exemplifying the values of humility, humor, honesty, hard work and hunger. The criteria for nomination is that an employee has gone beyond the call of duty and is dependable, has not received written or verbal warnings and has no attendance issues within six months of nomination, according to Unit Head **Carolyn Allen**.

We join CCS in congratulating Mr. Davis on receiving this honor.



**Pamela R. Poole, RN, Health Services Administrator at Jetson, congratulates Jamison Davis.**



**Planter display in Hancock, NY**

## Hammond Regional Office

### Condolences

**PPO Kasey Wall's** father recently passed away unexpectedly. Please keep Kasey and her family in your thoughts and prayers.

### RM Julie Eudy Retires with 34 Years of Service

Our **Regional Manager, Julie Eudy**, retired on April 1<sup>st</sup> with 34 years of state service. When Julie first announced her retirement date to the staff, we all thought it was an April Fool's Day prank! But it wasn't....and we threw a retirement party for Julie.

Our training room was transformed into a "Victorian Garden Party" for the occasion. **SSC4 Lori Wagner** and **PPO3 Tiffany James** worked tirelessly to decorate the room with assistance from other staff. They even had a water fountain with real fish in it! **PPS Dawnita Hodge** set up the program for the event and made sure that everything flowed smoothly. **PPO3 Dana May** planned the food and ensured that nothing was missed.

Julie shared memories of her years working for the state with the guests, and several guests shared their well wishes for Julie with those present. There were plenty of laughs and even a few tears. Julie was respected by her staff and will be missed.



**Retired RM Julie Eudy and her family.**

### A Change in Leadership

Following Julie's retirement, Hammond OJJ staff welcomed **Baton Rouge Regional Manager Sue Larisey** as our interim RM. We are currently sharing Sue with the Baton Rouge office until our RM position can be permanently filled. We welcome Sue aboard and thank her for being here for us when we need her! We also thank the Baton Rouge office for sharing her with us!



*Sue Larisey, left, presents Julie Eudy with a plaque at her retirement party.*

### SUPERSTAR!

**Administrative Coordinator 4 Courtney Pegues** was the Hammond OJJ Superstar for April. She was recognized by **Social Services Counselor 4 Lori Wagner** for her work on the Training Advisory Committee.

### Our SSC Teaches Courses for the One-Year JJ Certificate

**SSC4 Lori Wagner** will return to teach courses in the Juvenile Justice Curriculum online with Northshore Technical College.

### Training Opportunities

In April, Hammond OJJ staff completed firearms requalification, (**PPO3 Kevin Kulivan** shot a 120 during firearms requalification. Way to go Kevin!) completed their second EPICS coaching session, participated in a fire drill, and reviewed the Social Networking Policy.

### Administrative Professionals Honored with a Luncheon

Hammond OJJ staff showed their appreciation for our **Administrative Coordinators Janice Lewis, Terri Spencer and Courtney Pegues**, by putting together a luncheon. Each staff member brought a dish for a delicious potluck that was enjoyed by all! **SSC4 Lori Wagner** organized a "mad-lib" story about each member of the clerical staff, which turned out to be hilarious! **PPO3 Kasey Wall** provided the Administrative Coordinators with crowns to wear for the day!

### Lori Wagner Participates in GO DAY of Service to Others

**SSC4 Lori Wagner** recently participated in GO DAY at Istrouma Baptist Church, where she has been a member for over 10 years. The congregation of some 1500, forgoes the regular worship service one Sunday a month in early April to go out and minister in the community through service.



All of the participants wear green shirts, shown in the photo of Lori, and they serve throughout the Baton Rouge community in organized projects. The church preplans every project and the members are allowed to choose their project.

Lori and a crew from the church cleaned and planted flower beds at a local battered women's shelter. The project was a huge success; the women and children will enjoy the beautiful and colorful flowers in the courtyard for years to come. For more information visit [www.istrouma.org](http://www.istrouma.org).



## Central Office

The North American Association of Wardens and Superintendents' (NAAWS) annual conference was held in Baton Rouge in April. Several central office staff attended workshops and events. Special thanks to **Katie K. Justice** for volunteering at the conference.

April and early May saw several celebrations to recognize staff.

We began with a luncheon to recognize our Administrative Professionals, hosted by the executive team, under the direction of **HR Director Gwendolyn Jones** and **Director of Education Kim Mims**. We wanted our Administrative Professionals to know how much they are appreciated – we could not get by without them.

We honored **Nita Franklin-Shanklin, Katherine Abrams, Marvel Adams, Gwen Brinkley, NyKisha Franklin, Wanda Murry, Becky Richardson, Terri Scott** and **Shaeki Shanklin**, for all they do to keep the members of the executive team on top of things and on schedule.



*Luncheon for central office administrative assistants.*

To commemorate State Employee Recognition Day, the executive team hosted a breakfast for all central office staff, under the direction of **Auditor Gay Lynn Brown** (who prepared the spectacular food) and **Communications Director Jerel Giarrusso**.

Executive team members served the staff and Dr. Livers thanked everyone for all that they do, saying that the OJJ team is like a family, and that our staff is the agency's greatest asset.



*Employee Recognition Breakfast*

We had one more thing to celebrate, and it was a fabulous event. Central office staff honored **Deputy Secretary Dr. Mary Livers** with a surprise luncheon, under the direction of **DAS/Community-Based Services Carolyn Lewis**. The classroom where the luncheon was served was transformed into a gorgeous setting in blue and white, and they served a menu complete with an array of delicious food. Carolyn and her team pulled out the stops to present a memorable event, to let "Doc" know how much we appreciate her leadership – and how much we appreciate her. Several OJJ leaders made comments that brought tears and laughter to our eyes, and left Dr. Livers almost speechless.

The best part was that Doc was completely surprised – we managed to pull it off without her having a clue. We almost had a luncheon without the honoree, as Doc went off to a meeting and almost didn't get back in time to be surprised. **HR Specialist Judith Fontenot** blessed the meal, and **Asst. Sec. Dr. Girard Melancon** pinned Dr. Livers with a corsage. Speakers included **Carolyn Lewis, Comm. Director Jerel Giarrusso, Asst. Sec. Dr. Girard Melancon, DAS/Facilities Sean Hamilton, Jetson Director Daron Brown** and **Alexandria RM Johnny Qualls**.

**Carolyn** was assisted by central office staff as well as staff from the Baton Rouge Regional Office, including **RM Sue Larisey, Yolanda Latimer, Jennifer Anderson, Michelle**



Thomas, Brandon Woods, Patsy Adams, Courtney Dickerson, Keondra Riley, Melba Oubre, Nancy Gautreau, Angela Bridgewater, Jacqueline Page, Laquelia Smith, Katherine Abrams and Food Service Director Alethea Bornes.



*Above: Carolyn Lewis escorts Doc into the surprise luncheon in her honor. Below, Girard Melancon pins a corsage on Doc, who quipped that she had not worn one since her senior prom.*



### Congratulations to an OJJ Daughter



**Elena Russo, daughter of Communications Director Jerel Giarrusso**, finished her Masters of Fine Arts in stage management at the University of Cincinnati's College-Conservatory of Music. She completed a 3-year program in two academic years and maintained a 3.9 GPA, while teaching undergraduates during the day and stage managing/directing theatre productions at night. Elena now reports to French Woods Festival of the Performing Arts, a summer camp for kids in upstate New York, where she serves as Head Counselor/Director of Technical Theatre.

## Bridge City Center for Youth

### BCCY Passes ORM Review

Mr. Hamilton:

OMG, we are two for two at secure care facilities. BCCY had their ORM Audit with Kim Ramer, the loss prevention officer from the Office of Risk Management. They passed with flying colors and a percentage of 98.2. I can't begin to tell you how proud I am of the staff we have at BCCY. They all did a great job. Many thanks to Director London and her staff for supporting and meeting the mission of the Safety Program. I look forward to working with all of them in the future.

### BCCY ROCKS!

**Debbie Linder, Executive Management Officer**

### Volunteer Services Presents Quarterly Program

BCCY conducted its quarterly volunteer program meeting/orientation recently. The meeting was assembled to gather ideas and have volunteers network together as a whole with one common goal. Because it was Volunteer Appreciation Week, a continental breakfast was served to say thank you to all of the volunteers for their untiring dedication and countless hours of service. Many shared their experiences as it relates to Bible Study, which is to teach, enlighten, and motivate the youth and see to their spiritual needs. Some in attendance were members from Williams Blvd. Baptist Church, Regular Baptist Church, Franklin Avenue Baptist Church, Three Fold Ministries, House of Deliverance Baptist Church, **Family Liaison Donna Bowie** from Central Office, and more.



**Youth Joseph W.** recited a poem entitled, "Volunteer" that clenched hearts and sparked awe from the crowd. Youth Joseph also took part in the

meeting by presenting three beautiful baskets given away as door prizes and by speaking to the volunteers about their ideas from a youth's perspective. There were new ideas discussed such as grandmothers club, computer skills assistance, career exposure (career day), talent search, volunteer lifeguards and pool maintenance, letters of encouragement to youth, book fairs, etc. The subject most were concerned about was aftercare. The volunteers also discussed churches adopting youth and families to help assist with moving youth out of harm's way once released; out of state if necessary. As we departed from the meeting we felt a sense of accomplishment even though this is just the beginning of great things for Bridge City Center for Youth's volunteer program.



*BCCY's quarterly volunteer meeting.*

### **A Note of Congratulations on the Quarterly Event**

Kudos to **Ms. Sharonda Smith**, **Ms. Eddie Newsome** and **Ms. Cassandra Washington** for the superb job that was done on the quarterly program. A great job is being done by your staff in embracing partnerships throughout the faith-based community. These young ladies are to be commended for their dedication to the mission and vision of OJJ. Kudos also to **Ms. Dorothy Favorite** for her dual commitment as an employee and a part of the faith-based volunteer support.

These ladies are AWESOME!!

**Youth Joseph** of BCCY also did an *outstanding* job on reciting a poem that he'd written for the volunteers. Kudos to him as well.

Thanks to all and keep up the great work!  
**Donna Bowie, OJJ Family Liaison**

### **BCCY's Easter Activities**

**Irma Flemings** and **Kenyatta Guilford** from Riverside Alternative High School were paired to do the April assembly. The pair decided to not only do the monthly assembly but to also do a restorative justice project.

Their goal was to get 105 plush bunnies from co-workers, families and friends to be distributed to Bridge City Elementary School's pre-K and kindergarten classes. They also wanted some of the youth from Riverside to not only pass out the plush bunnies, but to also read Easter stories to the children.

Flyers went up, emails went out and at every faculty gathering one could hear Ms. Guilford saying, "Don't forget your bunnies!" She even donned Easter bunny ears to remind everyone. Students went to their dorm leaders, homeroom teachers, even **Principal Dr. Higgins**, to get them to persuade Ms. Flemings and Ms. Guilford to allow them to read to the elementary students, and pass out the plush bunnies. Four youth were selected for the coveted positions, **Charles B.**, **Cedric C.**, **Isaiah P.** and **Roberto V.** These young men did an incredible job. So much so, the two pre-K teachers invited the youth back to read to the children again and said they don't have to bring gifts. Of course this made the guys feel fantastic. Though they fell short of their goal, Ms. Flemings and Ms. Guilford persevered with four selected youth. They passed out 48 plush bunnies to two pre-K classes and one kindergarten class. Since they didn't have enough bunnies to issue to one class, Ms. Guilford set out and purchased books for the remaining two classes, leaving a handful of bunnies without a home. Those bunnies were dropped off at Children's

Hospital in New Orleans later. On Holy Thursday these ladies put on a Gospel concert featuring local artists, and oh what a concert! They presented solo artists **Sabrina Smith** from New Light Baptist Church and **Phyllis Cyprian** from Regular Baptist Church, who sang to the MC Delvin D. recording, "You Are the Wind beneath My Wings." Ms. Cyprian sang a very moving song, and we could see tears falling from people's eyes. Also performing was the star of the stage play *Mahalia*, who also pulled off a heart-wrenching version of **Mahalia Jackson's** hit "Sooner Will Be Done of the Trouble of the World." Their featured guest was none other than famed recording artist, **Mr. Joe "Cool" Davis** and he was truly "cool."

But the best of all these gospel singers was our very own Bridge City Center for Youth Gospel Praise Team featuring **Trustin A., Taylor B., Roberto V., Dexter J., Taylor M.** and **Larry W.** We were also graced with a poem "Hip Hop It's Easter Time" by **Steven J.** All in all, we were blessed by such a wonderful gospel concert.

### LA MOD/MYSI Training Conducted

BCCY Group Leaders and several executive team members participated in an intensive Louisiana Model "LaMod" training, presented by **Louis Molten** of MYSI. Mr. Molten visited the staff on campus while attending the weekly Senior Team Meeting. During the meeting, valuable information was shared and tips were given to broaden our scope, ensuring the best quality of care for our youth. The group then went on the road, and received training at our central office, where they were joined by many of our OJJ co-workers and friends. Instruction was presented by Mr. Molten and members of our central office executive team. The team wrapped up the training week back at BCCY with a graduation program for new employees, and Training in Place on the units and through group engagement.

Many of the group leaders shared what the experience meant to them. **Robert Scott** said, "What I got out of the class was that we are doing well and we are on the right course to help these kids become productive citizens. It encouraged me to continue to work hard and ensure that the younger staff members are being trained appropriately in our process."

**Terri DeLille** said, "First I thought it was a good refresher on how to deal with supervising staff and maintaining professional ethics. The timeline that was demonstrated was utilized all along, but I got a better understanding about the need to understand the behavior before treating the behavior, as well as providing for the behavior. This is what Mr. Molten meant when he says Do Not Test For Failure, Facilitate for Success....How can we enhance what we do? As it was taught, if we continue to repeat and repeat the need, we will succeed."

**Charmaine Jones** commented, "Last week's training was thought provoking. Why? I realized that even though we as an agency practice what we preach, there are still areas we need to improve in. One area is consistency. There was nothing introduced in that training that has not been said or done previously. We just sometimes start a process and don't continue doing it. I also realized in that training, the wealth of resources we have around the state and throughout the facilities. The commitment level is truly touching. If we would utilize each other's talents and resources, we could bring LaMod to a whole new level in the state of Louisiana and branch out nationally. What I would improve upon is being more consistent in expecting what I expect. This will not only take place with the staff but the youth as well. I will continue to motivate and train staff in ways to assist and work with the youth while teaching and encouraging them to make better decisions for life transformations."

**Lance Daniels** shared his thoughts, "The LaMod training was helpful in bringing all areas together. The group leaders, assistants,



and case managers shared information on where they are in the process. The instructor brought out some valued points and caused us to look at things differently. Even though it was review, it still brought out key things to look at. The time was well spent, and the positive interaction was much needed. To see like minds come together with the same goal made a difference. I am looking forward to the next training in Monroe.”

**Denise Gasquet** remarked, “The lesson I learned in LaMod training was: get to know your youth, work with your staff, call circle-ups before the problem escalates, don't attack the problem, work out the problem. The line movement will be a good strategy for the staff to get to know their youth. Overall, the training helped me learn to deal with staff, to address job issues and show them the LaMod way. I also felt good being around team members and working together to help change lives for our youth at Bridge City. I can't wait until June, for the next training. Thanks for allowing me to be a part of your family.”

**Deidre Willis** reflected, “I think the training was very informative. The thing I liked the most was the Line Movement, Looking Beyond...Behavior...Blame...and Hopelessness, enabling factors, consistency, routines, constant engagement, how to identify space for group meetings and check in, and also the skills staff need to develop such as understanding group-dynamics.”

Our staff at BCCY sat down to the training eager to learn and got up from the table enlightened, rejuvenated and ready to assist youth in redirecting their lives towards responsible citizenship.



*Unusual blue clematis in Baton Rouge.*

## Culinary Arts Students Participate in Community Events

The Culinary Arts students had the opportunity to participate in three great events recently. They participated alongside 50 great chefs and prepared chocolate chip cookies and lemon squares for the Women Chefs' Show Off at the Atrium in Baton Rouge. The event brings in money to help the Battered Women's Program in the Baton Rouge area. Over 800 people attended the event and really enjoyed our sweets.

In April the students were asked to join **Chef Michael Garahan** on his journey along with the Louisiana Restaurant Association, Louisiana Chefs and Culinary Students, the American Culinary Federation of Greater Baton Rouge and Pro Start programs to build the World's Largest Granola Bar. The students met at the Hilton Riverside in New Orleans, offering slices of the World's Largest Granola Bar with coffee for a \$5.00 donation, to benefit the American Cancer Society and the Mary Bird Perkins Cancer Center. Chef John Besh of New Orleans said, “Food is that common thread that brings us all together and through food we can change the world for the better.” We all had a great day and together we raised \$1000 to help fight breast cancer. In Louisiana we have the most deaths in the country from breast cancer! Mammograms save lives! For more information on how to donate and see more pictures of the event go to [www.chefsformammograms.com](http://www.chefsformammograms.com).

Also in April the students were able to join chefs, students and food service professionals from across the central region of the United States in the nation's most famous culinary city, for the 2011 American Culinary Federation Central Regional Conference hosted by the ACF of New Orleans Chapter. It took place at the Crescent City Hilton New Orleans Riverside. The students had a great time as they experienced the power of connection through education, competitions, and a great meal event. There was networking with purveyors and a tasting of the flavors



that make our state famous around the world. The students got a good look at the latest information on culinary innovations and watched many different dishes being demoed. They were able to build relationships with other professionals in the culinary field while engaging in educational opportunities.

What better way to open their minds to the world of food! Although the students only attended one day, they came away with a different look at what their profession as a future chefs can be like.

Thanks to **Director of Education Kim Mims**, **Title One James E. Green** and **Administrative Assistant NyKisha Franklin** for helping with the arrangements to make all this possible, and to **Director Linda London** and **Asst. Director Rickey Wright** for providing security staff and transportation for the students.



***Chef John Folse CEC AAC was doing a demo and was happy to pose for a photo with the students.***



***Mr. Ed Green, seated, as a cattleman, got the class adopted by the Louisiana Cattleman's Association. This is the whole gang!***



***The BCCY team included Justin R., Glenn C., Joseph W., Chef Sonnier, C. Turner, Elijah N. and Mr. Ed Green.***



***Culinary Arts students Joseph W. and Christopher T. making a sale at the World's Largest Granola Bar event.***

## Baton Rouge Regional Office

April began with firearms re-qualifications. All of the Baton Rouge commissioned officers re-qualified at the East Baton Rouge Parish Sheriff's Office Range.

Special thanks to **Captain Durwood Gros** for re-qualifying Baton Rouge OJJ, and special thanks to the team at Hammond OJJ, including **PPS Roy Wittorf**, **PPS Johnny Prentice** and **PPO Mark Davis**, for always taking time out of their busy schedules to get us prepared and ready on the firing line. Kudos to **PPO Keondra Riley** and **PPO Larry Aaron** who scored 119s.

## Congratulations

**PPS Wendy Sarner** was selected **Employee of the Month**. Wendy's coworkers nominated her because she is always willing to lend a helping hand. She is definitely there when you need her.

## You're Looking Good!

**RM Johnny Qualls** and the staff at Alexandria OJJ are looking good for their assistance in detaining a BR runaway youth overnight in the Alexandria office. We want you to know that we thank you so much for your time and your assistance in helping us to resolve our situation. We're watching you, Alexandria OJJ, and you prove time and time again that we truly are one big happy OJJ family. Thanks!

## Kudos

Kudos to **PPO Leslie Jones** and **PPO Keondra Riley** who gave from their pockets to help a youth from another region obtain supplies for the Youth Challenge Program. While transporting the youth to YCP for orientation, the two officers learned that one of the youths' family was not financially able to obtain all of the required supplies for enrollment into the program. As the youth told the officers her story she was filled with tears and worries, wondering what would happen when she arrived without all of her supplies. The officers made a quick stop, purchased the remainder of the supplies, brightened the youth's day and transported her safely to the YCP campus. Good work, Ladies!

Kudos to **PPO Katina Broden** and **PPO Roy McBride** for coordinating our Restorative Justice Program for Crime Victimization Week. The youth were led in a discussion about victims and their families. Each youth was asked to identify victims in different scenarios and to state what action caused that person to become a victim. The youth were also asked to write a poem, essay or rap

explaining what they've learned about victimization or how their actions affect others. The youth were very cooperative and open with their views and experiences. The following was written by one of our youth:

Since being at Harmony Center it has brought out my best  
Now I'm striving harder to reach success  
Years ago I was immature and thought I was a man  
But now I grasp the real concept of life and understand  
Harmony Center has helped me to a new beginning in life  
So in the future I can bless my family, my kids, and my wife  
So thank you Harmony Center for making me blessed  
Because now I am a man and I'm striving for success

By **M. R. Jr.**

## Training Opportunities

FEMA Trainings

Traffic Control Training - **PPO Patsy Adams** and **PPS Michelle Thomas**

Policy 10.4

SAVRY Training - **PPS Wendy Sarner**, **PPO Patsy Adams** and **PPO Stefanie Krygowski**

## Baton Rouge Newspaper Features TO Jason Jones

"Jason is a transport officer with the Baton Rouge Office," said **RM Sue Larisey**. "This is probably the most genuine person I have ever met. I'm so proud of him for receiving this award."

## From The Advocate McKinley volunteer honored

By Charles Lussier, Advocate staff writer  
Published: May 13, 2011

**Jason Jones** volunteered with McKinley High School — particularly its marching band —

for 18 years but he never looked for any recognition.



*Jason Jones receives the VIPS Crystal Apple Award for volunteer service to McKinley High School.*

After volunteering for 10 years, Jones was eligible for Volunteers in Public Schools' top honor, the Crystal Apple Award. But the publicity-shy Jones never applied for it. And he would not have applied this year had it not been for the years of pestering from McKinley High's principal, **Armond Brown**.

"He stayed on me pretty hard and told me I had to do it and I didn't understand why," Jones said. "I just finally gave in."

Brown's persistence paid off Thursday when Jones beat out seven other veteran volunteers to win the 2011 Crystal Apple Award at a ceremony held at University Baptist Church.

Jones has deep roots at McKinley: he went there and, he said, his father, Clarence, served for a time as its assistant principal. Jones' family is also a musical one. His father led a choir for years, and Jones' three sons play trombone and trumpet, with the oldest playing these days in Southern University's marching band.

Jones himself first learned to play vibraphone and stringed instruments but eventually settled on percussion. He became a drum major for McKinley High, and he went on to play in the marching band at Southern University under band Director Lawrence Jackson.

Along the way, Jones' zeal for music and the marching band was exceeded only by his love of working with students.

In 1992, he began volunteering with his old high school band and never looked back.

"The payback is when you see kids excel and make something out of their lives," Jones said.

This past school year, he logged more than 1,000 volunteer hours at 800 E. McKinley St., practicing with the marching band, organizing fundraisers, talent shows and working daily with the kids. That's on top of a busy day job working for the state Office of Juvenile Justice.

Band Director Frank Williams said Jones has an uncanny ability to sense when things are wrong with the band — or individual members — and say something that will help.

Williams said Jones is also an inspiration to many of the players. "Jason has served as a compass to many kids who lacked direction," Williams said.

Jones, who also volunteers as the assistant band director, routinely gets in his car and seeks out youths he's worried are going to blow their opportunities, namely landing a college scholarship and a ticket to better things.

"Being a musician, joining a band, puts you in a position you can excel as high as you can dream, if you put forth the effort to be the best musician as possible," he said.

"There are so many things going on in that particular neighborhood that at 2:25 p.m., if we don't give them something to do positive, they could walk into a situation where they're extremely lost," Jones added.

The McKinley High marching band has excelled. Last year it won state championships for its division. Jones said the band is pretty strict and regularly lets students know that if they screw up at school or at home, there are consequences.



"We have something we can take away from them," he said.

The allure of that halftime show on Fridays continues to draw students to the marching band, and Jones is doing his best to draw them in. "No matter how much it rains during the week, on Friday it's not raining," he said. "So on Fridays, at the football game, the fans want to see a show."



*Top: daffodils in Port Hudson. Below: Vintage rose, Houmas House Plantation, Darrow, LA.*

## Alexandria Regional Office

**PPO2 Brian Charles** presented a speech to the Rapides Parish Drug Court on "The Effects of Drugs"- how drugs can have an impact on people's lives - mentally, financially, and emotionally. Brian encouraged the youth to get sober and stay sober, and pursue their education. He stressed how important it is for them to obtain their high school diploma or GED so that they can become productive citizens.

## Administrative Professionals Honored

**Administrative Coordinator 4 Sharon Graham** and **Administrative Coordinator 3 Cassandra Conston**, were treated by staff members to lunch at Tunk's Cypress Inn to celebrate Administrative Professionals Day. Thanks to you all, it was greatly appreciated.

**Lori Johnson, Donna Desoto, Clay Dupuy, John Baker** and **Jency Moore** attended the 31<sup>st</sup> Annual Louisiana Governor's Conference on Juvenile Justice held in New Orleans. Much knowledge was gathered from each session attended.

**Rodney McNeal** attended Louisiana Drug Court Conference in New Orleans.



## Recipe of the Month

### BCCY Culinary Arts & Occupations

#### Chef Ronald J. Sonnier CEC

For this month's recipes, I thought first that I would include the recipe for the wonderful granola bar we put together for our part of the event we attended. Can you believe by the time we had completed the project, ours was the size of two eight foot tables side by side! Another dish my family can't get enough of is Crawfish Etouffée. Since everyone is enjoying big crawfish boils, I thought you might want to try this recipe using any leftover tails. **Bon appetit  - Chef Ron Sonnier**



#### Granola Bars

- |                         |                       |
|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| 6 cups rolled oats      | 1 cup raisins         |
| 2   cup brown sugar     | 2 teaspoon salt       |
| 1 teaspoon cinnamon     | 1   cup honey         |
| 3 cup all-purpose flour | 3 eggs, beaten        |
|                         | 1   cup vegetable oil |
|                         | 2 tbsp vanilla        |

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. In a large bowl, mix together oats, brown sugar, cinnamon, flour, raisins and salt. Make a well in center, and pour in the honey, egg, oil and vanilla. Mix well using your hands. Place on a well greased   sheet tray. Bake for 30-35 minutes until the bars turn brown around the edges. Cut while still warm. Variations: substitute 3 cups granola for the oats, brown sugar and raisins. Chocolate chips will also work great in place of the raisins.



#### Cajun Crawfish Etouff e



- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1 lb. margarine                         | 3 tbsp salt   |
| 2 cups chopped bell pepper              | 2 tsp cayenne pepper                                |
| 3 cups chopped onion                    | 2 tsp ground celery seed                            |
| 1 cup chopped celery                    | 1 can 6 oz. tomato paste                            |
| 2 cups chopped green onions (tops only) | 1 cup flour   |
|   cup minced garlic                     | 6 cups chicken stock                                |
| 3 tsp garlic powder                     | 3 to 5 lbs crawfish tails (better the more you add) |

Melt margarine, preferably in an iron dutch oven. Add chopped vegetables and seasonings. Cover and cook slowly for about 30 to 40 minutes or until vegetables are softened, stirring frequently. Add tomato paste and mix well. Add flour and mix well. Add chicken stock and stir in until smooth. Cook until sauce has thickened and then add your crawfish tails and cook for another 15 minutes. Can be served over rice or used as a topping for meat, fish, or poultry.

# The Inside Scoop...of OJJ

*The Inside Scoop...of OJJ* is published monthly to communicate with and about OJJ staff in offices and facilities throughout the state, about agency activities, happenings and items of interest.

*The Inside Scoop...of OJJ* is produced by the Central Office with input from staff statewide.

...until next month

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